

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PER-01 CPR-01 SSC-01 SS-15
NSC-05 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 HA-05 /064 W
-----037785 250917Z /15

R 241130Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4045
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMEMBASSY MASERU
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY GABORONE

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY, LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDIP, WZ
SUBJECT: PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS TO KING SOBHUZA II

1. KING SOBHUZA II OF SWAZILAND RECEIVED ME FOR PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS FEBRUARY 23. SIMPLE 15-MINUTE CEREMONY TOOK PLACE AT EMBO STATE HOUSE, AN UNIMPOSING ROYAL OFFICE COMPLEX SOME TWELVE MILES FROM MBABANE, IN PRESENCE OF PRIME MINISTER MAPHEVU, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, SEVERAL MINISTERS, AND DOZEN PERMANENT SECRETARIES AND REPRESENTATIVES OF SWAZI NATIONAL COUNCIL. MY WIFE, DCM WACHOB, AND IRO PERLOW WERE INVITED TO ACCOMPANY.

2. I WAS FOLLOWED BY FRENCH AMBASSADOR. ANOTHER TEN NON-RESIDENT AMBASSADORS ARE AWAITING SUMMONS TO PRESENT CREDENTIALS. THIS BACKLOG RESULTED FROM FACT THAT FOR NEARLY 18 MONTHS, I.E., SINCE OCTOBER 1976, KING HAS NOT SCHEDULED ANY CREDENTIALS CEREMONY. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR IS SAID TO

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HAVE WAITED NINE MONTHS. OUR NOTIFICATION TO GOS OF MY READINESS TO PRESENT LETTERS WAS COMMUNICATED IN DECEMBER 1976.

3. CAUSES OF INTERVENING 14 1/2 MONTH DELAY ARE ATTRIBUTABLE ABOUT EQUALLY TO GOS AND USG. ON SWAZI SIDE, FOR 1 1/2 MONTHS FROM DECEMBER 1976 UNTIL CHANGE

OF US ADMINISTRATION ON JANUARY 20, 1977, AND FOR
6 1/2 MONTHS FROM EMBASSY'S RECEIPT OF NEW CREDENTIALS
ON AUGUST 7, 1977 UNTIL FEBRUARY 23, 1978, THE KING
WAS DESCRIBED AS UNAVAILABLE FOR DIPLOMATIC BUSINESS
DUE TO HIS SECLUSION AND OTHER TRADITIONAL
OBLIGATIONS RELATED TO (A) YEAR-END SWAZI RELIGIOUS
CEREMONY OF INCWALA, (B) TO SEASONAL MOVE TO A
RURAL RESIDENCE, AND (C) TO HIS MOURNING ON
THE OCCASION OF SEVERAL ROYAL DEATHS. ON US SIDE, FOR
6 1/2 MONTHS FROM CHANGE OF US ADMINISTRATION OF JANUARY 20,
1977 UNTIL EMBASSY'S RECEIPT ON AUGUST 7, 1977 OF
CREDENTIALS SIGNED BY PRESIDENT CARTER, EMBASSY HAD
WITHDRAWN ITS REQUEST WHILE AWAITING NEW
CREDENTIALS. (ASSESSMENT OF SWAZI ATTITUDES AND
EXPLANATIONS FOLLOWS BY SEPARATE MESSAGE.)

4. THE FORMAL EXCHANGE OF REMARKS (MBABANE A-7) AND
SUBSEQUENT TEN-MINUTE INFORMAL CONVERSATION WERE MARKED
BY ATMOSPHERE OF CORDIALITY AND GOOD HUMOR. ONE WELCOME,
BUT UNEXPECTED, NOTE IN KING'S FORMAL REMARKS WAS HIS
COMMENT THAT "WE ARE FOLLOWING WITH KEEN INTEREST AND
ADMIRATION YOUR GOVERNMENT'S BOLD STAND FOR AND DEDICATION
TO THE DEFENCE AND MAINTENANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN
ALL MEMBER STATES OF THE WORLD COMMUNITY." THIS IS AN
UNMISTAKABLE CONCESSION TO US PRESSURE; INDEED THE RELEASE
EARLY THIS YEAR OF THREE OF THE FOUR PROMINENT PERSONS
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HELD UNDER DETENTION LAW IS CONSIDERED TO BE DIRECTLY
RELATED TO US EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN.

5. THE KING AT AGE 78 APPEARED VIGOROUS AND IN
GOOD HEALTH AND SPIRITS. (HE READS WITHOUT GLASSES.)
TO WHAT EXTENT HE IS INFORMED AND IN CHARGE OF
AFFAIRS OF STATE WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF FURTHER
COMMUNICATIONS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CREDENTIALS PRESENTATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MBABAN00664
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780087-0981
Format: TEL
From: MBABANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780217/aaaaaoab.tel
Line Count: 103
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d1cb38d0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3488609
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS TO KING SOBHUZA II
TAGS: PDIP, WZ, (SOBHUZA II)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d1cb38d0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014